

VZCZCXRO5945
RR RUEHMA RUEHPA
DE RUEHOS #0518 3641216
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 291216Z DEC 08
FM AMCONSUL LAGOS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0392
INFO RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA 0033
RUEHC/DEPT OF LABOR WASHDC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS LAGOS 000518

Sensitive But Unclassified
SIPDIS

DOL FOR SUDHA HALEY
TREASURY FOR DPETERS, RHALL, RABDULRAZAK

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ELAB](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: NIGERIA: UNION LEADERS EXTOL LABOR'S PERFORMANCE IN 2007
ELECTION

Sensitive But Unclassified; Handle Accordingly

11. (SBU) Summary: Nigeria's National Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Employees (NUPENG) played a role in mobilizing volunteers for the campaign of Governor Adams Oshiomhole, who ran with the support of both the Action Congress (AC) and Labor Party (LP). Labor volunteers also supported Labor Party candidate Olusegun Mimiko in Ondo State whose election was upheld by the tribunal and who is currently awaiting a February judgment of the appeals court; and LP candidate and Nupeng trustee Bashiru Lamidi who ran third in Oyo State. Despite these gains LP lacks funds and a strong network of grassroots supporters in part because union members already belong to other parties. Labor is working to repeal laws that forbid union contributions to candidates. End Summary.

12. (SBU) On December 11, Pol-Econ Chief and PolSpec met with leaders of two oil sector unions, the National Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Employees (NUPENG) and the Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association (PENGASSAN) about workers' participation in the 2007 elections. NUPENG leaders in particular, played roles in the campaign of Adams Oshiomhole as Edo State Governor, and believe the Labor Party contributed significantly to Oshiomhole's victory. High level officials, two of whom are from Edo State, said they personally mobilized an effective network of volunteers in their communities and those of their extended families.

13. (U) The leaders claimed that the Labor Party's support was responsible not only for the victory in Edo State, but also the impressive performances in Ondo and Oyo States by Labor Party gubernatorial candidates. (Note: On July 25, an election tribunal upheld Labor Party (LP) Candidate Olusegun Mimiko's victory in the 2007 Governorship election in Ondo State. An appeal of that decision is pending in federal appeals court. In Oyo State, LP candidate and NUPENG trustee Bashiru Lamidi came third in the 2007 governorship election. End Note.) The union leaders said the Labor Party's accomplishments in the last election showed that the Nigerian labor movement has now achieved its long held goal of being an active player in national politics. In the past, labor had confined itself to traditional labor issues and had done little to enhance workers' participation in party politics.

14. (SBU) Despite these achievements, the Labor Party still lacks a network and grassroots base needed to win federal elections. The LP had been counting on support from union members in many other states but was disappointed to discover that most union members were already affiliated with other parties. The Labor Party faced other major challenges to success in the last election. Critical among them was lack of funding to match the huge financial resources of other parties. Although unions were willing to contribute to LP candidates, the laws forbid labor organizations from funding political campaigns. Unions are working to change these laws, they

said.

[¶5.](#) (SBU) Comment: The NUPENG leaders clearly played a personal role in promoting labor's cause through the Labor Party. The leadership of PENGASSAN, which represents senior staff white collar workers, shared few details about labor's role in the campaign. End Comment

Hudson